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INFO RUEHCO/AMEMBASSY COTONOU 0030
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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OTRA](#) [KCRM](#) [KWMN](#) [PHUM](#) [ELAB](#) [SMIG](#) [NI](#) [BN](#) [SG](#) [SL](#)
SUBJECT: FREETOWN GRANTS G/TIP COUNTRY CLEARANCE REQUEST
FOR AMY LEMAR

REF: SECSTATE 186971

¶1. Post welcomes and grants country clearance for the visit of Amy Lemar, Program Analyst for Africa in the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (G/TIP), to Freetown December 10 - 14. A contract expediter meets all visitors - see para 9 below. Visitors are urged to read the contents of this telegram, as it provides useful information intended to ensure the success of your visit to Freetown.

¶2. Control officer for the visit: Martin A. Dale
Embassy Freetown Switchboard: 232-22-515-000 or 232-76-515-000 (in country 076-515-000).
Embassy after-hours number (local guard): 232-76-634-603 (in country 076-634-603).
CELL PHONE: in country: 076-616-609; 232-76-616-609
E-Mail: daleMA@state.Gov.
Address of New Embassy Compound: American Embassy, Leicester Square/Regent, Freetown, Sierra Leone

¶3. All visiting USG personnel are required to receive a security briefing from the Regional Security Officer (RSO) upon arrival. (See Paragraph 10.)

¶4. Visitors should consult the State Department Intranet (Opennet: [HTTP://Freetown.State.Gov/](http://Freetown.State.Gov/)) or Internet ([HTTP://Freetown.Usembassy.Gov](http://Freetown.Usembassy.Gov/)) sites for further information on the post and country.

¶5. Accommodations: Reservations have been made at the Country Lodge Hotel (Tel: 232-22-235-589 / 235-098) at USD 120.00 per night, which is within per diem. Credit cards are generally not accepted. Please bring cash or travel orders with valid fiscal data.

¶6. Visa Information: A passport and visa are required for entry and visitors should obtain a visa in advance. The latest information can be obtained from the Embassy of Sierra Leone, 1701 19th Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20009, Tel: (202) 939-9261 or the nearest overseas Sierra Leonean Embassy. There is no charge for diplomatic or official passport holders. There is a charge of 100.00 USD for tourist passport holders.

Airport visas may be obtained only in extreme circumstances, as they are very difficult to arrange and are not encouraged. Therefore, visitors coming from countries without a Sierra Leonean Embassy should contact their Control Officer at Embassy Freetown and fax a copy of their passports well in advance of travel.

¶7. Health/Medical: Medical facilities in Sierra Leone fall critically short of U.S. standards. Presently, the only reliable medical facility is located 45 minutes outside of Freetown. Official visitors who do not possess a Class I

medical clearance or have serious health concerns, e.g., diabetes, heart disease, asthma, or who are on blood thinners (with the exception of aspirin) are discouraged from traveling to Sierra Leone. The Embassy Health Unit stocks only limited medical supplies and is not equipped to handle serious illnesses. All visitors and permanently assigned employees traveling to Sierra Leone must have their vaccinations current to include, but not limited to, tetanus, yellow fever, polio, meningitis, and rabies (for those staying longer than 30 days). The cholera vaccine is not required. Visitors should begin taking malaria prophylaxis two weeks prior to arrival. It is mandatory that visitors bring their own supply of medications, as local pharmacies in Freetown are usually unable to fill prescriptions. The International Certificate of Vaccinations yellow card should be hand carried as proof of current yellow fever inoculation. Avoid eating uncooked vegetables and salads at restaurants and hotels.

¶8. Medical Insurance: Non-Department of State personnel or contractors are required to have medical evacuation insurance prior to traveling to Sierra Leone.

¶9. Travel to/from Freetown: SN Brussels Airlines services Freetown on Sunday, Monday and Thursday from Brussels. British Mediterranean services Freetown via London/Heathrow on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Regional air service into Freetown is sporadic, thus be prepared to handle alternate ticketing and/or increased food and lodging expenses.

Arriving passengers should proceed through immigration, baggage claim, and customs. The Embassy contract expediter (Lungi Hotel) will meet all official passengers and arrange for transportation to Freetown since Lungi International Airport is located across the harbor from Freetown.

Transport to Freetown may be by helicopter or hovercraft. Passengers are required to pay the expediter for the cost of travel from Lungi to Freetown. The cost of the helicopter is 50.00 USD (payable in local currency). The cost of the hovercraft is USD 35.00, but it is often out of order.

Passengers departing Freetown for locations within Africa must pay an Airport Tax of \$40.00 at the airport. (This tax is already included in tickets for European destinations.)

¶10. Threat Assessment - Security Advice: All visiting USG personnel will be required to receive a security briefing from the Regional Security Officer (RSO) upon arrival. Sierra Leone is rated high for crime. Visitors will be provided a two-way radio and instructions on how to summon assistance in the event of an emergency. All travel outside of Freetown must have the approval of the Control Officer and the RSO. The following guidance is provided to ensure your visit to Sierra Leone is safe and uneventful:

- Do not use credit cards and personal checks in the local economy;
- Do not carry or wear any items that may attract attention by thieves. Carry needed items deep in your pockets;
- Do not walk around the city alone, especially at night;
- Do not use taxis or public transportation;
- Do not accept the assistance of strangers;
- Do not take photographs of people without first asking as they can easily become offended. Do not photograph government or military facilities, including the airport;
- If confronted by criminals, do not make threatening movements, comments, or gestures. Immediately give the criminals what they want.

¶11. Computer Systems Access: If you are a DOS employee and would like to access OpenNet during your visit (without taking the 30-60 minute systems security briefing), please bring confirmation that you have attended, within the last year, the "Security Awareness Briefing on OpenNet Plus". This must a copy of the certificate you received when you completed the briefing. Ask your systems administrator if you need help locating the DS Security Awareness Briefing Certificate.

¶12. Post Policy on Laptops and Thumb Drives: The RSO must approve the use of any laptop computer in the Embassy. Thumb drives are not authorized for use on Embassy computers unless officially issued with a Dept. of State classification label on it or approved by the IMO. Thumb drives are absolutely not/not allowed on the CLASSNET. Thumb Drives brought into the Embassy must be cleared by the RSO Office.

¶13. General Information: Travelers with TDY orders and fiscal data may cash checks at the Embassy cashier. The current exchange rate is 2900 Leones to one USD.
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